

UP-GRADING  
BY TRAINING

Opening new doors  
to employment by  
increasing workers'  
skills.

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of  
EMPLOYMENT  
FACTS

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## Brief Employment Facts



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## UP-GRADING BY TRAINING

As part of a broad effort to increase employment, the Canadian Government recently offered to pay a larger share of the cost of programs for the training and re-training of unemployed people under "Schedule M" of the Federal-Provincial Vocational Training Agreements.

Until recently the Federal Government and those provinces which provided training programs under the Schedule shared equally in the costs of such programs. The amended agreements now provide for the federal share to be increased to 75 per cent when a basic number of student training days has been reached.

The purpose of the program is to raise an unemployed person's level of proficiency and thus open new employment opportunities to him. The new amendment, designed to increase the number and extent of training programs, is in some respects a response to the situation revealed by a recent study of education and training in relation to employment. This showed that only 30 per cent of all jobs in Canada are open to unskilled and semi-skilled workers, and that the proportion is decreasing as technology advances and employers are forced to seek workers with higher levels of education and training.

Upgrading the skills of the unemployed and thereby building a better-trained and more efficient work force, could undoubtedly produce some very real benefits — by creating more earning and purchasing power, reducing unemployment and cutting welfare costs.

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As with all technical and vocational training the responsibility for establishing training programs for unemployed persons rests with the provinces. Courses may be given in existing municipal or provincial vocational schools or other institutions, or in special training centres established by the provinces. Trainees must be registered with the local National Employment Service office, which assists the provinces in the selection of persons to take the courses offered.

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At the discretion of the provinces, training may be either refresher training or training for a new occupation. Courses

need not be restricted to occupations which are in demand in the area concerned — the stress is placed on training which will improve the unemployed worker's opportunities to obtain gainful employment. The length of the courses may vary from a short period, in the case of refresher courses or simple machine operators' courses, to six months or even a year depending on the type of training involved. Although full-time classes are recommended part-time instruction may be given at the discretion of the provinces. A minimum of six persons must be in general attendance at any class before Federal Government assistance can be provided.

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While he is being trained in a course to which he has been directed by the Unemployment Insurance Commission the unemployed worker can continue to receive unemployment insurance benefits up to the maximum to which he is entitled, and he does not lose his benefits by refusing a job in favour of training, or while he is in training. The provinces may pay a living allowance to a person who is taking Schedule M training, if he is not entitled to Unemployment Insurance benefits, and the Federal Government will share in the cost of such allowances on the same basis as other training costs.

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Some municipal officials are taking leadership in investigating the extent of the need for this kind of training in their community, and are co-operating with the provinces in setting up programs. To be eligible for Federal assistance, all community training programs for the unemployed must be under the direction of the provincial government.

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Employers can be of direct assistance by advising training officials on the types of training which would be most useful to them. In this way training programs can be oriented to the immediate needs of industry. Employers can also co-operate with the National Employment Service and training officials by offering training on the job to local unemployed people to fill existing vacancies.



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